JAN.-FEB. NO. 19

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BIG TOWN

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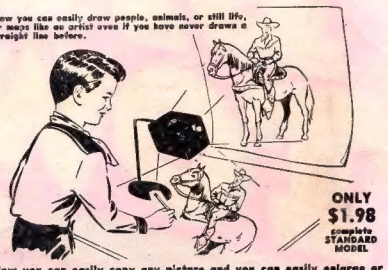
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BIG TOWN

THE NEGATIVE VOTES OF THREE MEN HAD KEPT RICH AND INFLUENTIAL BIGELOW PORTER OUT OF THE ONE CLUB HE WANTED MOST TO JOIN--- **BIG TOWN'S** EXCLUSIVE **PRESS CLUB!** AND IMMEDIATELY AFTERWARDS BEGAN THE HORRIFYING AND MYSTERIOUS SERIES OF EVENTS WHICH BROUGHT STEVE WILSON FACE TO FACE WITH DEATH--- AND THE RUTHLESS KILLER WHO CHANGED THE **PRESS CLUB** INTO A DREADED---

CLUB of CONDEMNED MEN

BIG TOWN, No. 19, Jan.-Feb., 1953. Published bi-monthly by National Comics Publications, Inc., 480 Lexington Ave., New York 17, N. Y. Whitney Ellsworth, Editor. For advertising rates address Richard A. Feldon & Co., 205 E. 42nd St., New York 17, N. Y. Entire contents copyrighted 1953 by National Comics Publications, Inc. Except for those who have authorized use of their names, the stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this periodical are entirely imaginary and fictitious, and no identification with actual persons, living or dead, is intended or should be inferred.

Printed in U.S.A.

AS STEVE WILSON AND HIS FRIEND POLICE INSPECTOR CALLAHAN RIDE TO ANSWER A TRAGIC SUMMONS...

FIRST ELMER GATEWOOD IS MYSTERIOUSLY POISONED... AND NOW PAUL RAILSON!

INSPECTOR, IT MAY BE JUST A COINCIDENCE-- BUT BOTH MEN BELONGED TO THE EXCLUSIVE **PRESS CLUB!**

THE **PRESS CLUB?** BUT RAILSON'S NO NEWSPAPERMAN, STEVE!

SOMETIMES THE CLUB ELECTS CELEBRITIES TO HONORARY MEMBERSHIP... IF THEY'RE POPULAR! YOUNG RAILSON WAS ELECTED LAST YEAR..

...AND LAST WEEK A NEW CANDIDATE FOR MEMBERSHIP RECEIVED THREE BLACKBALLS! TWO OF THEM WERE CAST BY GATEWOOD AND RAILSON!

STEVE, YOU MAY HAVE HIT ON SOMETHING!

BEFORE THE RAILSON MANSION, AN AGITATED FIGURE GREETS THE POLICE CALL...

I'M FRED RAILSON, PAUL'S BROTHER, INSPECTOR! HE WAS AT HIS DESK... AND SUDDENLY HE KEELED OVER-- DEAD!

JUST LIKE ELMER GATEWOOD DID!

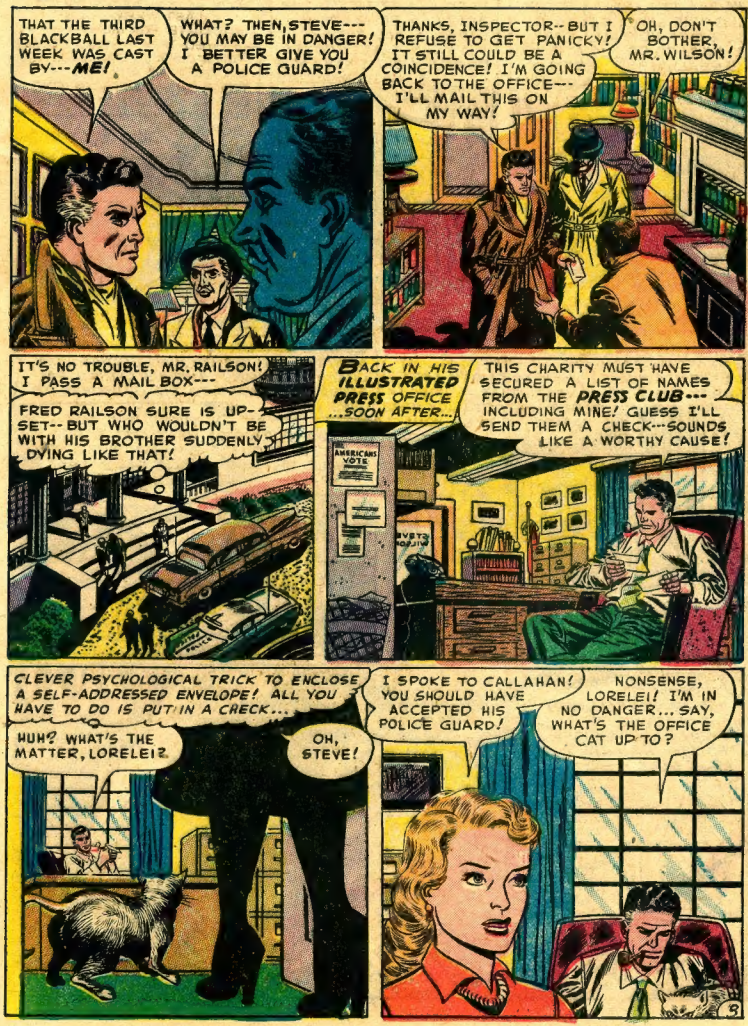
IN THE STUDY OF THE UNFORTUNATE YOUNG MAN-ABOUT-TOWN...

POISONED, ALL RIGHT-- BUT NO TRACE OF THE DEADLY SUBSTANCE AROUND HERE!

LOOK AT THIS, INSPECTOR! EVIDENTLY GATEWOOD AND RAILSON BOTH SUBSCRIBED TO THE SAME CHARITY!

THEY WERE BOTH GENEROUS MEN-- I GUESS THAT'S ONE REASON WE TOOK THEM INTO THE **PRESS CLUB!** BY THE WAY, INSPECTOR, I SHOULD MENTION..

ASSOCIATED BENEFIT FUND
204 ELM STREET,
BIG TOWN


THAT THE THIRD BLACKBALL LAST WEEK WAS CAST BY---ME!
WHAT? THEN, STEVE--- YOU MAY BE IN DANGER! I BETTER GIVE YOU A POLICE GUARD!
THANKS, INSPECTOR--BUT I REFUSE TO GET PANICKY! IT STILL COULD BE A COINCIDENCE! I'M GOING BACK TO THE OFFICE--- I'LL MAIL THIS ON MY WAY!
OH, DON'T BOTHER, MR. WILSON!
IT'S NO TROUBLE, MR. RAILSON! I PASS A MAIL BOX---
FRED RAILSON SURE IS UPSET--BUT WHO WOULDN'T BE WITH HIS BROTHER SUDDENLY DYING LIKE THAT!
BACK IN HIS ILLUSTRATED PRESS OFFICE ...SOON AFTER...
THIS CHARITY MUST HAVE SECURED A LIST OF NAMES FROM THE PRESS CLUB--- INCLUDING MINE! GUESS I'LL SEND THEM A CHECK---SOUNDS LIKE A WORTHY CAUSE!
AMERICANS VOTE
CLEVER PSYCHOLOGICAL TRICK TO ENCLOSE A SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE! ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS PUT IN A CHECK...
HUH? WHAT'S THE MATTER, LORELEI?
OH, STEVE!
I SPOKE TO CALLAHAN! YOU SHOULD HAVE ACCEPTED HIS POLICE GUARD!
NONSENSE, LORELEI! I'M IN NO DANGER... SAY, WHAT'S THE OFFICE CAT UP TO?

HA-HA! IT'S LICKING THIS ENVELOPE FOR ME! NOW ALL I HAVE TO DO IS SEAL IT!
STEVE, THE CAT'S ACTING AWFULLY QUEER---
IT FELL OVER! STEVE, IT'S... DEAD!
IT LICKED THIS ENVELOPE--- AND THEN--- GREAT SCOTT! DID I SAY I WAS IN NO DANGER?
SOON AFTER--AT THE POLICE CHEMICAL ANALYSIS LABORATORY...
YOU'RE A VERY LUCKY MAN, MR. WILSON! THE GUM ON THIS ENVELOPE CONTAINS ONE OF THE DEADLIEST POISONS KNOWN TO SCIENCE!
JUST AS I THOUGHT!
IN THE LAB, STEVE GETS A PHONE CALL FROM HIS FAITHFUL FRIEND, HARRY THE HACK---
SO 204 ELM STREET IS JUST AN EMPTY LOT!
YEAH--THAT FIGURES! OKAY---SCOOT BACK HERE, HARRY! I NEED YOU!
LEAVING LORELEI TO HANDLE THE SENSATIONAL NEWS FOR THE EVENING EDITION, THE CRACK NEWSHAWK AND HIS CABBIE PAL SPEED NORTHWARD TO THE OUTSKIRTS OF BIG TOWN...
BIGELOW PORTER'S PLACE IS ABOUT A MILE UP, HARRY---
THAT'S THE GUY WHAT GOT BLACKBALLED IN THE PRESS CLUB LAST WEEK, AIN'T IT, STEVE?
SUDDENLY...
THE SAME! CALLAHAN IS MEETING US THERE! ALL THE SIGNS POINT---HARRY! LOOK OUT!
SCRAEEEEE
4

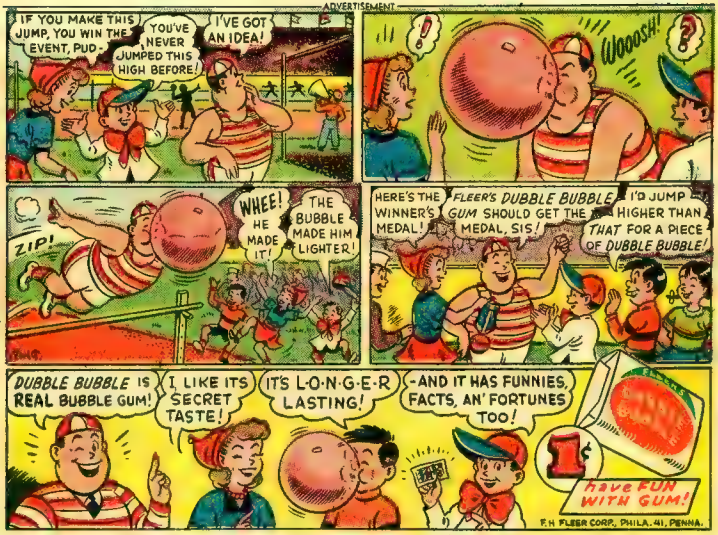
YOU TAKE WILSON, MUSCLES! I'LL HANDLE THE DRIVER!
A COUPLA GOONS, STEVE-- WIT' BRASS KNUCKLES!
DON'T USE YOUR ROD UNLESS YOU HAVE TO, MUSCLES! WE DON'T WANT TO ATTRACT ANY WITNESS!
YOU'RE ALL MUSCLES AND NO SKILL, PAL!
KLANG
BRAINS ALWAYS PAYS OFF AGAINST BRAWN--- SEE?
OOF!
I WAS GONNA LET YUH HAVE IT QUICK, WISE GUY--- BUT NOW I'LL CUT YUH TO RIBBONS!
AS A BULL-LIKE RUSH CARRIES THE VALIANT NEWSMAN OFF HIS FEET---
WHEN I GET 'EM DOWN, THEY DON'T GET UP!
THERE'S--- UGH--- A FIRST TIME FOR EVERYTHING!
WITH THE DEXTERITY OF AN EXPERT WRESTLER, STEVE SECURES A GRIP ON HIS BURLY FOE---
HAVE A SMOKE, MUSCLES!
CHOKE.....CHOKE
MOMENTS LATER--- AS MUSCLES GOES LIMP--- AND PASSES OUT...
HARRY! YOU OKAY?
YEAH--- BUT YOU KNOW, STEVE--- THAT GUY'S NOGGIN PUT A DENT IN MY MONKEY WRENCH!

A SEARCH OF THE KAYOED THUGS REVEALS AN INTERESTING ITEM---
A NOTE ON THE LETTERHEAD OF THAT FAKE CHARITY! "HERE IS YOUR FEE---$1000! TAKE CARE OF STEVE WILSON! " NO SIGNATURE---
THEN WHO?
AS I WAS SAYING WHEN WE WERE SO RUDELY INTERRUPTED, HARRY--- ALL SIGNS POINT TO BIGELOW PORTER! MATTER OF FACT, YOU CAN ALMOST SEE HIS HOUSE FROM HERE---
SUDDENLY--- FROM THE DENSE WOODS BORDERING THE ROAD...
RIFLE SHOTS! DOWN, HARRY!
BAM! BANG! BAM!
AS QUIET ONCE MORE DESCENDS ON THE GENTLE, SUBURBAN SETTING...
THIS IS HUNTING SEASON, BOSS! THAT COULDA BEEN ACCIDENTAL!
ACCIDENTAL-ON-PURPOSE, IS MORE LIKE IT, HARRY!
SLIPPING INTO THE WOODS--- USING THE TREES FOR COVER-- THE DOUGHTY DUO MOUNTS A HILLCREST---
THERE'S PORTER'S PLACE! I'LL MAKE IT FROM HERE ON FOOT, HARRY! YOU GO BACK AND STICK WITH THOSE GOONS TILL THE POLICE ARRIVE!
OKAY, STEVE!
NOT LONG AFTER IN BIGELOW PORTER'S HUGE SUBURBAN HOME...
SO YOU AND FRED RAILSON WERE OUT HUNTING, MR. PORTER?
YES! WE SEPARATED--- AND I'VE JUST RETURNED! BUT--- WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS VISIT, INSPECTOR CALLAHAN?
6

THIS, PORTER! PERHAPS YOU CAN EXPLAIN HOW THIS STATIONERY--OF THE PHONY ASSOCIATED BENEFIT FUND--GOT INTO YOUR HOUSE?
I---I NEVER SAW THAT BEFORE!
I'M NO KILLER! YOU---YOU'VE GOT TO BELIEVE ME!
FUNNY--- THIS GUN HASN'T BEEN FIRED!
JUST A SECOND... BEFORE YOU TAKE HIM IN, INSPECTOR, THERE'S SOMETHING I'D LIKE TO CHECK ON! WHERE'S YOUR STUDY, PORTER?
DOWN THAT CORRIDOR! THE LAST DOOR!
MOMENTS LATER... AS STEVE IS WORKING PORTER'S TYPEWRITER...
AND THIS NOTE WAS NOT TYPED ON THIS MACHINE! I THINK CALLAHAN AND I ARE ON THE WRONG TRACK!
DON'T MOVE, WILSON!
FRED RAILSON! I WAS JUST THINKING ABOUT YOU!
YEAH, I FIGURED YOU WERE, WILSON! THAT'S WHY YOU AND I ARE GOING TO TAKE A LITTLE WALK!
OUT THAT REAR DOOR!
I SHOULD HAVE BEEN ON TO YOU EARLIER, RAILSON--- THE QUEER WAY YOU LOOKED WHEN YOU TRIED TO GET THAT CHARITY LETTER AWAY FROM ME!
AND THE FACT THAT, AS A HUNTING GUEST HERE, YOU WERE THE ONE MAN WHO COULD HAVE PLANTED THAT PHONEY STATIONERY IN THE HOUSE--- AS "FINAL EVIDENCE" AGAINST PORTER!

AS THE KILLER AND HIS UNARMED PREY MOVE EVER DEEPER INTO THE WOODS...
THESE VINE CREEPERS... THERE USED TO BE A GAME WE PLAYED WITH THEM WHEN I WAS A KID...
JUST A LITTLE WAYS FURTHER, WILSON!
WE'D PRETEND THE VINE GOT CAUGHT IN OUR CLOTHING OR SOMETHING... LIKE THIS...
THIS IS FAR ENOUGH!
GRIPPING THE HEAVY VINE WITH HIS ARM, THE CANNY NEWSHAWK YANKS IT DOWN FROM THE TREETOP...
AND THEN IT WOULD FALL ON WHOMEVER WAS BEHIND US---
LIKE THIS!
UGH!
YOU SQUANDERED YOUR WHOLE INHERITANCE, DIDN'T YOU, RAILSON? THAT'S WHY YOU KILLED YOUR BROTHER---TO GET HIS MONEY!
POW!
A HALF-HOUR LATER--- AS THE RUTHLESS MURDERER'S SCHEME TO FRAME BIGELOW PORTER IS EXPOSED...
YOU MADE AN UNDERSTANDABLE MISTAKE, INSPECTOR! I ADMIT IT SURE LOOKED LIKE I WAS GUILTY...
GUESS I'VE BEEN WRONG ABOUT PORTER... HE'S A SWELL GUY!
ONE EVENING A WEEK AFTERWARD... AT THE EXCLUSIVE PRESS CLUB...
AND I'M PLEASED TO WELCOME YOU INTO THE PRESS CLUB, PORTER... BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE MEMBERS!
THANKS, STEVE... FOR EVERYTHING!
THE END

ADVERTISEMENT


IF YOU MAKE THIS JUMP, YOU WIN THE EVENT, PUD-
YOU'VE NEVER JUMPED THIS HIGH BEFORE!
I'VE GOT AN IDEA!
Wooosh!
ZIP!
WHEE! HE MADE IT!
THE BUBBLE MADE HIM LIGHTER!
HERE'S THE WINNER'S MEDAL!
FLEER'S DUBBLE BUBBLE GUM SHOULD GET THE MEDAL, SIS!
I'D JUMP HIGHER THAN THAT FOR A PIECE OF DUBBLE BUBBLE!
DUBBLE BUBBLE IS REAL BUBBLE GUM!
I LIKE ITS SECRET TASTE!
IT'S L-O-N-G-E-R LASTING!
-AND IT HAS FUNNIES, FACTS, AN' FORTUNES TOO!
1¢
Have FUN WITH GUM!
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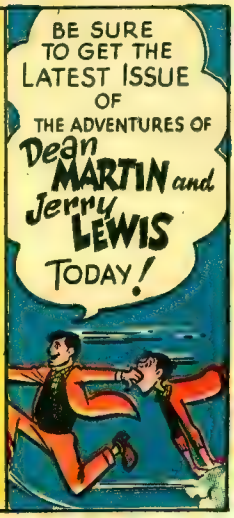


BUZZY says: "FREE SPEECH--FREE FOR ALL!"

SAY, LOOK AT WHAT TOM STONE IS DOING -- TEARING DOWN THE POSTERS WE'VE BEEN PUTTING UP!
ELECT BROWN FOR MAYOR
ELECT BROWN FOR
WHAT'S THE IDEA, TOM?
MY DAD SAYS MAYOR GREEN IS THE BEST MAYOR FOR THIS TOWN -- SO I'M AGAINST BROWN!
THAT DOESN'T GIVE YOU THE RIGHT TO TEAR DOWN THESE POSTERS!
HEY, FELLERS -- COME ON! THERE'S A CAMPAIGN RALLY DOWN THE STREET. MR. BROWN HIMSELF IS SPEAKING!
FURTHERMORE, MAYOR GREEN HAS NOT--
ELECT BROWN FOR MAYOR
WAIT A MINUTE!
BOO!
BOO!
BOO!
ELECT BROWN FOR MAYOR
COUNTY
THAT'S NOT BEING FAIR! GIVE MR. BROWN A CHANCE TO SPEAK, WHETHER YOU'RE FOR HIM OR AGAINST HIM! THAT'S THE AMERICAN WAY OF DOING THINGS!
GOSH, THAT'S MY DAD -- AND HE'S STICKING UP FOR MR. BROWN!
SEE WHAT I MEAN?
LATER...
THAT'S THE SPIRIT, TOM! WORK FOR YOUR FATHER'S CANDIDATE ALL YOU WANT TO -- BUT DON'T TEAR DOWN THE OTHER GUY WITHOUT GIVING HIM A CHANCE TO SPEAK!
ELECT GREEN

THIS PAGE IS PUBLISHED AS A PUBLIC SERVICE IN COOPERATION WITH LEADING NATIONAL SOCIAL WELFARE AND YOUTH-SERVING ORGANIZATIONS.

BIG TOWN
DON'T COME NEAR ME, WILSON.'
KEEP AWAY.'
?
IT'S NO USE, STEVE.' THE CITIZENS OF BIG TOWN DON'T DARE LET YOU INTERVIEW THEM.'
STAY BACK.
WHAT STRANGE FATE BEGAN DOGGING THE FOOTSTEPS OF STEVE WILSON. FIGHTING NEWSMAN OF THE ILLUSTRATED PRESS, WHEN SUDDENLY, CITIZENS FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE TURNED FROM HIM IN TERROR-- AND THE CRY RANG OUT UP AND DOWN THE STREETS OF BIG TOWN...
"BEWARE OF STEVE WILSON!"
ATOP BIG TOWN'S TALLEST BUILDING, NEWSMAN STEVE WILSON COMPLETES AN IMPORTANT INTERVIEW...
GOSH, MR. WILSON.' NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE WRITTEN UP IN THE ILLUSTRATED PRESS.'
IT'S PEOPLE LIKE YOU WHO ARE THE BACKBONE OF THE CITY, TOM.' THAT'S WHY I'M WRITING THIS SERIES ON "WHAT MAKES BIG TOWN TICK." GOODBYE -- AND THANKS FOR YOUR TIME.'
AS STEVE WILSON LEAVES THE BUILDING...
GREAT SCOTT.' THE TV ANTENNA IS CRACKING.'
CRACK
AAAAA

TOM--PLUNGING TO HIS DOOM.!

AND SHORTLY, ON THE STREET BELOW...

IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN AN UNKNOWN DEFECT THAT CAUSED THAT ANTENNA TO SNAP. I DON'T KNOW! BUT THERE WASN'T A CHANCE OF SAVING HIM! POOR TOM.!

ACCIDENTS WILL HAPPEN! BETTER GO HOME AND REST--YOU'VE HAD A TOUGH DAY!

THAT EVENING, THE *ILLUSTRATED PRESS* INFORMS THE PUBLIC OF THE TRAGEDY...

ILLUSTRATED PRESS
BIG TOWN'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

STEEPLEJACK PLUNGES TO DEATH! ILLUSTRATED PRESS REPORTER EYE-WITNESS! STEVE WILSON INTERVIEWS TOM HARVEY SECONDS 'BE-FORE DEATH PLUNGE!

STEVE WILSON COVERS

LATER, ON THE WEST SIDE OF TOWN...

WILSON'S SURE GOT A NOSE FOR NEWS, BOSS! SCOOPED ALL THE OTHER PAPERS ON THAT STEEPLE-JACK DEATH! INTERVIEWED THE GUY JUST BEFORE HE FELL! HE'S A JONAH!

HMM... THAT GIVES ME AN IDEA!

PRESS

THAT NEWSHAWK'S BEEN A THREAT TO US SINCE WE MOVED INTO TOWN! TILL NOW IT'S BEEN TOO DANGEROUS TO FINGER HIM--BUT I JUST GOT AN ANGLE! CALL THE BOYS, WILLIE!

SURE, BOSS!

THE FOLLOWING DAY, AS STEVE CONTINUES TO GATHER MATERIAL FOR THE SERIES, "WHAT MAKES *BIG TOWN* TICK!"...

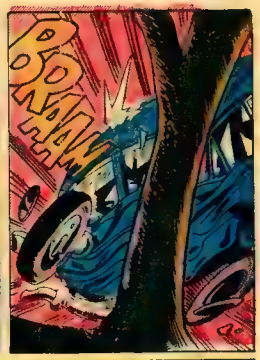
I'M AT THE JOB EVERY MORNING AT 3 A.M.--! I'D SAY I DELIVER SOME TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY QUARTS OF MILK DAILY TO OUR CUSTOMERS, AND I WON A SAFE DRIVING CONTEST. ANYTHING ELSE?

GUESS THAT COVERS IT ALL! BE SURE TO CHECK OUR THURSDAY EDITION--YOU'LL BE IN THERE SOMEWHERE!

DAIRY
DISTRIBUTOR OF MILK
MILK

A MOMENT LATER, AS THE MILK TRUCK LEAVES THE GARAGE AND MAKES A SHARP TURN...
HE'S GOING TOO FAST DOWN THAT HILL.'

WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM? WHY DOESN'T HE BRAKE -- SLOW UP!
SCREEE
SCREEE

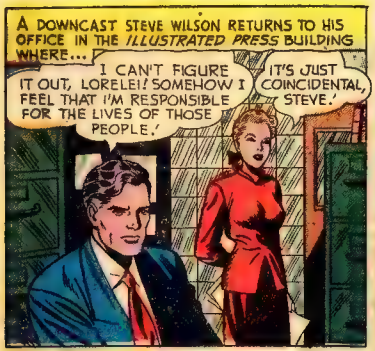

BOOM

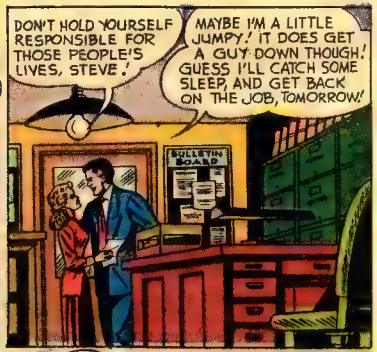
A FEW MINUTES LATER...
D.O.A.--DEAD ON ARRIVAL! SAY--THIS IS THE SECOND TIME IN TWO DAYS YOU'VE BEEN RIGHT AT THE SCENE OF AN ACCIDENT! YOU'RE QUITE A NEWSMAN, WILSON.'
THIS IS THE KIND OF STORY I'D RATHER NOT WRITE.

THE NEXT EVENING, AS THE DISHEARTENED NEWSMAN INTERVIEWS THE NEXT PERSONALITY ON HIS "SERIES" SCHEDULE...
I'M BEGINNING TO THINK I'M A JINX, MARCEL! EVERYONE I'VE INTERVIEWED FOR THIS SERIES HAS MET WITH A FATAL MISHAP.'
HA! I DO NOT SCARE SO EASILY, MY FRIEND! YOU ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE ACCIDENTS! NOW GO BACK TO YOUR NEWSPAPER AND WRITE A GOOD STORY ABOUT MARCEL, THE FINEST CHEF IN BIG TOWN!
KITCHEN

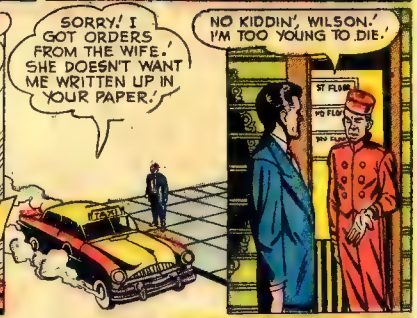
BAROOOM

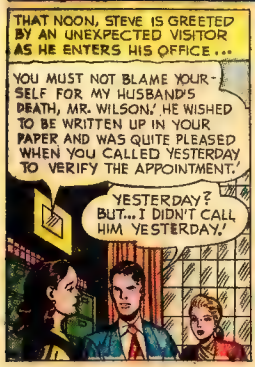
AS THE STUNNED NEWSMAN RUSHES BACK INSIDE THE KITCHEN...
HE'S... DEAD... FROM A GAS EXPLOSION.'


A DOWNCAST STEVE WILSON RETURNS TO HIS OFFICE IN THE *ILLUSTRATED PRESS* BUILDING WHERE...
I CAN'T FIGURE IT OUT, LORELEI! SOMEHOW I FEEL THAT I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LIVES OF THOSE PEOPLE.'
IT'S JUST COINCIDENTAL, STEVE.'


DON'T HOLD YOURSELF RESPONSIBLE FOR THOSE PEOPLE'S LIVES, STEVE.'
MAYBE I'M A LITTLE JUMPY.' IT DOES GET A GUY DOWN THOUGH! GUESS I'LL CATCH SOME SLEEP, AND GET BACK ON THE JOB, TOMORROW.'
BULLETIN BOARD

BUT THE FOLLOWING DAY, THE ACE CRIME REPORTER RUNS INTO A WALL OF HOSTILE CITIZENS AS HE CONTINUES THE INTERVIEWS...
LOOK, WILSON.' I GOTTA CLIMB BUILDINGS AND WASH WINDOWS FOR A LIVIN'.' CAN'T AFFORD TO BE JINXED.'
SLAM


SORRY.' I GOT ORDERS FROM THE WIFE.' SHE DOESN'T WANT ME WRITTEN UP IN YOUR PAPER.'
NO KIDDIN', WILSON.' I'M TOO YOUNG TO DIE.'
ST FLOOR
NO FLOOR
NO FLOOR


THAT NOON, STEVE IS GREETED BY AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR AS HE ENTERS HIS OFFICE...
YOU MUST NOT BLAME YOURSELF FOR MY HUSBAND'S DEATH, MR. WILSON.' HE WISHED TO BE WRITTEN UP IN YOUR PAPER AND WAS QUITE PLEASED WHEN YOU CALLED YESTERDAY TO VERIFY THE APPOINTMENT.'
YESTERDAY? BUT... I DIDN'T CALL HIM YESTERDAY.'

YOU MUST HAVE FORGOTTEN, *M'SIEU*.' YOU CALLED TO VERIFY THE TIME OF THE APPOINTMENT.'
I SEE... WELL, THANK YOU FOR COMING.'

AFTER THE CHEF'S WIFE LEAVES...
LORELEI! CALL THE RAILROAD YARD AND DELIVER THIS MESSAGE AT ONCE -- THERE'S A LIFE AT STAKE! I'M GOING DOWN THERE TO INTERVIEW BILL SUMMERS, THE SWITCHMAN.'
4

SHORTLY, IN THE BIG TOWN RAILROAD YARDS...
STEVE WILSON.' WELL, IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU GOT AROUND TO INTERVIEWING ME! WILL IT HURT MUCH?
IT'LL ONLY TAKE FIFTEEN MINUTES OF YOUR TIME, BILL! LET'S STEP INSIDE THE TOWER TOO MUCH NOISE OUT HERE.'
AND AS STEVE INTERVIEWS BILL SUMMERS INSIDE THE SWITCH TOWER...
SURE YA GOT THAT TIME STRAIGHT, WILLIE.'
BET MY LIFE ON IT.' THAT SWITCHMAN'S GOT TO PULL SWITCH NUMBER 17 AT 3:30 SHARP--A FEW MINUTES FROM NOW.'
SEVERAL MINUTES PASS...THEN...
EXCUSE ME A MINUTE, STEVE.' HAVE TO PULL SWITCH 17 TO LET THE AFTERNOON FREIGHT THROUGH.'
WHAT'D I TELL YA!
SECONDS LATER, AS THE ELDERLY SWITCHMAN STANDS BY THE SWITCH LEVER...
LOOKS LIKE YOU'LL BE NUMBER FOUR ON WILSON'S HARD-LUCK LIST, POP! WITH OUR HELP, OF COURSE!
BUT AS THE FREIGHT THUNDERS DOWN UPON THE HELPLESS SWITCHMAN...
LOOK! THE OLD GUY'S GOT REAL BOUNCE!
TOO MUCH BOUNCE! SOMETHING'S WRONG HERE.
SCREEEE
SUDDENLY, THE SWITCHMAN WHIRLS AND CONFRONTS THE STARTLED HOODLUMS...
STEVE WILSON!
THAT'S RIGHT,' THIS TIME YOU'RE NOT ATTACKING AN UNWARY CITIZEN.'
AS THE CRIMINALS REACH FOR THEIR GUNS...
I'M READY, WAITING AND EAGER!
I'LL FIX YOUR HIDE, NEWSBOY!
BAM!
5

I'LL GET HIM!
ARGHH!
YOU'RE THROUGH, KILLER!
YOUR MURDEROUS SCHEME BLEW UP WHEN MARCEL'S WIFE MENTIONED I HAD CALLED TO DOUBLE-CHECK THE TIME OF MY APPOINTMENT WITH HER HUSBAND.
I CALLED MARCEL... ONLY ONCE FOR THE ORIGINAL INTERVIEW... YOUR FAKE CALL... TO DISCOVER THE EXACT TIME I WOULD BE SEEING BEAUCHAMP... GAVE ME THE CLUE TO YOUR PLOT... THAT'S WHY I USED MYSELF AS A DECOY!
AFTERWARD, AS THE GRIM NEWSMAN EXPLAINS TO THE POLICE IN HIS OFFICE...
EXACTLY! BUT BY MURDERING INNOCENT CITIZENS, THEY HOPED TO DRIVE ME OUT OF THE NEWSPAPER GAME AND MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO RUN DOWN CLUES TO THEIR CRIMES! THEY KNEW THAT PEOPLE WOULD NOT SPEAK TO A JONAH NEWSMAN!
THEY DIDN'T DARE KILL YOU FOR FEAR OF CREATING PRESSURE ON THEM!

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DON'T FLUNK the Finger-Nail Test! Don't let dry, unruly hair and loose, ugly dandruff spoil your looks! Keep your hair neat and natural all day long with Wildroot Cream-Oil.
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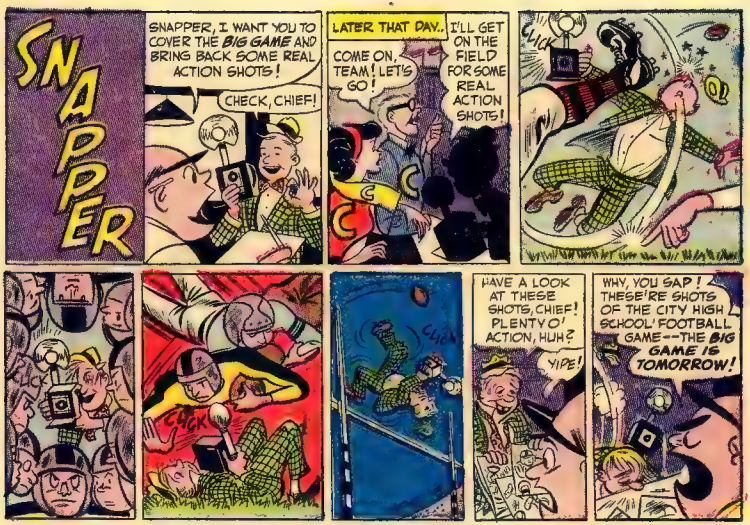
SNAPPER
SNAPPER, I WANT YOU TO COVER THE BIG GAME AND BRING BACK SOME REAL ACTION SHOTS!
CHECK, CHIEF!
LATER THAT DAY..
COME ON, TEAM! LET'S GO!
I'LL GET ON THE FIELD FOR SOME REAL ACTION SHOTS!
CLICK
CLICK
CLICK
CLICK
HAVE A LOOK AT THESE SHOTS, CHIEF! PLENTY O' ACTION, HUH?
YIPE!
WHY, YOU GAP! THESE 'RE SHOTS OF THE CITY HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL GAME—THE BIG GAME IS TOMORROW!

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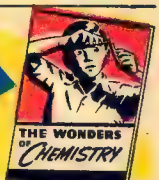
New, exciting 16 page book on Magic, Mysteries, Marvels of Chemistry!



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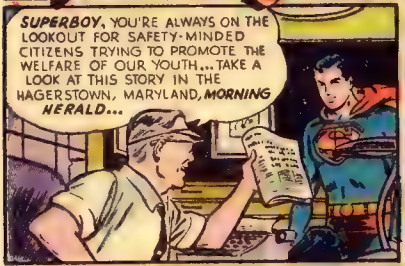
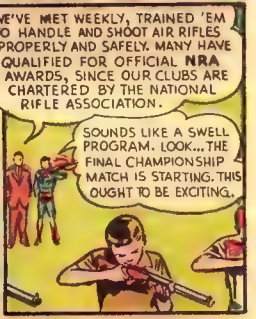
Hey Fellas—Ask Dad for CHEMCRAFT

SUPERBOY discovers A New Kind of JUNIOR SPORT!

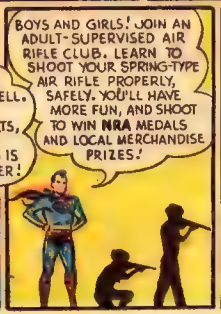

SUPERBOY, YOU'RE ALWAYS ON THE LOOKOUT FOR SAFETY-MINDED CITIZENS TRYING TO PROMOTE THE WELFARE OF OUR YOUTH... TAKE A LOOK AT THIS STORY IN THE HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND, MORNING HERALD...

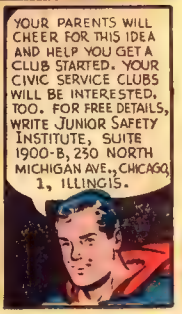
HMMM... A NEW KIND OF ORGANIZED SPORT FOR JUNIORS... YES, I THINK I'LL GET A BOX SEAT FOR THIS...
NET
FOUR AIR RIFLE CLUBS TO HOLD SEASON'S FINAL CHAMPIONSHIP SHOOT

SOARING TO THE HAGERSTOWN "Y", WHERE THE SHOOT IS GOING ON, THE BOY OF STEEL MEETS TOM CAMPBELL, PRESIDENT OF THE CIVITAN CLUB...
I UNDERSTAND YOU'RE THE ONE WHO SPARKED THIS AIR RIFLE CLUB IDEA, MR. CAMPBELL ...TELL ME MORE ABOUT IT...
GLAD TO, SUPERBOY... OUR LOCAL CIVITAN CLUB WANTED A PROJECT TO MAKE BETTER CITIZENS OF HAGERSTOWN YOUNGSTERS. SO WE FORMED FOUR AIR RIFLE CLUBS--THE CIVITAN EAGLES, COBRAS, PANTHERS AND BLACK HAWKS.


WE'VE MET WEEKLY, TRAINED 'EM TO HANDLE AND SHOOT AIR RIFLES PROPERLY AND SAFELY. MANY HAVE QUALIFIED FOR OFFICIAL NRA AWARDS, SINCE OUR CLUBS ARE CHARTERED BY THE NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION.
SOUNDS LIKE A SWELL PROGRAM. LOOK... THE FINAL CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH IS STARTING. THIS OUGHT TO BE EXCITING.

LATER, AFTER THE TEAM AND INDIVIDUAL CHAMPIONS HAVE RECEIVED THEIR TROPHIES AND MERCHANDISE PRIZES...
MEET OUR NEW CITY-WIDE CHAMPION, YOUNG BILL REAMS!
CONGRATULATIONS, BILL! AND YOU, TOO, MR. CAMPBELL. YOU'VE REALLY STARTED SOMETHING NEW IN SPORTS, AND SHOWN HOW AIR RIFLE CLUB SHOOTING IS MORE FUN AND SAFER!
GOSH, HELLO, SUPERBOY!


BOYS AND GIRLS! JOIN AN ADULT-SUPERVISED AIR RIFLE CLUB. LEARN TO SHOOT YOUR SPRING-TYPE AIR RIFLE PROPERLY, SAFELY. YOU'LL HAVE MORE FUN, AND SHOOT TO WIN NRA MEDALS AND LOCAL MERCHANDISE PRIZES!


YOUR PARENTS WILL CHEER FOR THIS IDEA AND HELP YOU GET A CLUB STARTED. YOUR CIVIC SERVICE CLUBS WILL BE INTERESTED, TOO. FOR FREE DETAILS, WRITE JUNIOR SAFETY INSTITUTE, SUITE 1900-B, 230 NORTH MICHIGAN AVE., CHICAGO 1, ILLINOIS.

Johnny Law

HEADQUARTERS DETECTIVE

IT SEEMED LIKE A CLEAR-CUT CASE--MURDER HAD BEEN COMMITTED AND THE KILLER HAD CONFESSED! BUT AS ACE HEADQUARTERS DETECTIVE JOHNNY LAW EXAMINED THE SCENE OF THE CRIME, HE FOUND THE WRONG CLUES, THE WRONG MURDER WEAPON, AND FOR ALL HE KNEW, THE WRONG MURDERER!

The INNOCENT KILLER!

YOU'VE GOT TO BELIEVE ME! I KILLED JOEY LONG!

IMPOSSIBLE! YOUR CONFESSION IS FULL OF HOLES!

IN GAMBLER JOEY LONG'S SWANK APARTMENT, A HEATED ARGUMENT DEVELOPS AFTER AN ALL-DAY CARD SESSION...

WHY, YOU CHEAP CROOK--NO WONDER YOU'VE BEEN WINNING STEADILY ALL DAY! YOU'VE BEEN DEALING FROM THE BOTTOM!

SORE LOSER, HUH? NOBODY CALLS JOEY LONG A CHEAT!

PUT THAT GUN AWAY!

LET GO!

FOR SEVERAL SECONDS, THE TWO MEN GRAPPLE FOR THE LETHAL WEAPON UNTIL ...

BLAM!

I-I'VE KILLED HIM... GOT TO GIVE MYSELF UP TO THE POLICE... ONLY THING TO DO!

SHORTLY, AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS, WHERE ARNOLD KIRKLAND INFORMS ACE DETECTIVE JOHNNY LAW OF THE ACCIDENT...

WE STRUGGLED FOR POSSESSION OF THE GUN... THEN SOMEHOW IT WENT OFF! I DIDN'T MEAN TO SHOOT HIM... I WAS ONLY DEFENDING MYSELF!

YOU DID THE RIGHT THING REPORTING THIS AT ONCE, MR. KIRKLAND! NOW LET'S BOTH GO BACK TO JOEY'S APARTMENT AND YOU CAN SHOW ME EXACTLY HOW IT ALL HAPPENED!

JUST AS THE DUO IS ABOUT TO LEAVE...

BILL! I KNEW YOU'D COME IN ANSWER TO MY PHONE CALL!

I'M WILLIAM JANSEN, MR. KIRKLAND'S LAWYER! WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT, DETECTIVE LAW?

AFTER LAWYER JANSEN HAS BEEN TOLD THE DETAILS...

THIS IS AN OBVIOUS CASE OF SELF-DEFENSE! I INSIST THAT ARNOLD BE RELEASED ON BOND *IMMEDIATELY!*

I'M AFRAID THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE UNTIL AN INVESTIGATION HAS TAKEN PLACE, MR. JANSEN! YOU CAN JOIN US AT THE SCENE OF THE CRIME IF YOU WANT TO!

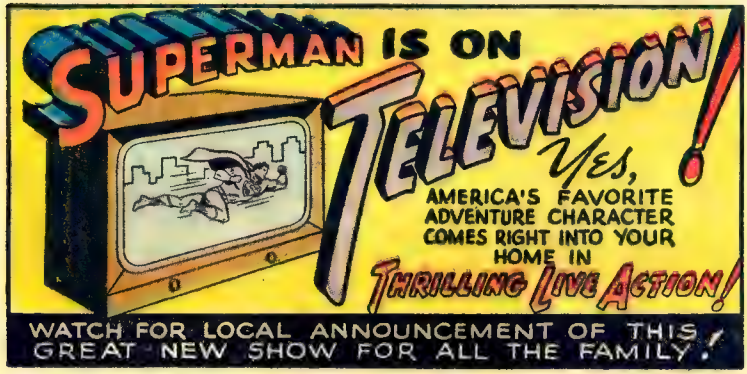
TEN MINUTES LATER, AT JOEY LONG'S APARTMENT...

LONG'S DEAD ALL RIGHT, BUT THERE ARE NO SIGNS OF A STRUGGLE HERE!

THAT'S STRANGE! I DISTINCTLY REMEMBER TIPPING THE CARD TABLE OVER! T-THERE'S THE DEATH GUN, DETECTIVE LAW!

THIS PISTOL HASN'T BEEN FIRED IN DAYS! THE CHAMBER'S CLEAN--NO ODOR OF POWDER!
IT CAN'T BE! I HEARD THE GUN GO OFF!
YOU'LL HAVE TO RELEASE HIM NOW, DETECTIVE LAW! THERE'S NO EVIDENCE HE DID COMMIT MURDER!
SORRY! I'LL HAVE TO TAKE HIM INTO CUSTODY FOR A COMPLETE INVESTIGATION! AFTER I DOUBLE-CHECK THINGS HERE, WE'LL BE AT HEADQUARTERS IF YOU CARE TO APPEAR IN HIS BEHALF!
SOON AFTER, AS JOHNNY LEAVES THE MURDER SCENE,
YOU SAY YOU LEFT BY THIS REAR EXIT AND... THAT SHADOW!
ABRUPTLY, JOHNNY SPRINGS SIDEWAYS TO AVOID THE ONRUSHING ATTACKER...
CAUGHT ME OFF BALANCE!
WET PAINT
THEN...
RUN FOR IT, KIRKLAND! BEAT IT!
WET PAINT
AN HOUR LATER, AN EXPLOSION ROCKS THE HOME OF KIRKLAND'S BUSINESS PARTNER, CLYDE RANDELL...
BLAM!
WHEN JOHNNY LAW IS SUMMONED TO THE SCENE FROM HEADQUARTERS, ACCOMPANIED BY KIRKLAND'S ATTORNEY,
KIRKLAND'S OUR MAN, SIR! I SAW HIM STAGGERING AWAY FROM THE SCENE! I PICKED UP HIS WALLET NEAR THE HOUSE! MUST HAVE DROPPED IT WHEN HE PLANTED THE BOMB!
NO, NO...
KIRKLAND! NOW YOU REALLY DID IT! KILLED RANDELL BECAUSE OF THAT BITTER ARGUMENT YOU HAD WITH HIM LAST WEEK!
SO, KIRKLAND, YOU DECIDED TO GET RID OF THE PARTNER YOU DIDN'T LIKE AS LONG AS YOU WERE UNDER ARREST FOR MURDER ANYWAY!
IT'S NOT TRUE! I DIDN'T KILL RANDELL! I ONLY CAME HERE TO TELL HIM ABOUT THE TROUBLE I WAS IN...

JOHNNY EXAMINES THE BOMBED MANSION..
THIS CASE IS ALL TOPSY-TURVY! WHY SHOULD KIRKLAND GIVE HIMSELF UP-- AND THEN ARRANGE TO HAVE A HOODED FRIEND FREE HIM? WHO SWITCHED THE MURDER GUN? AND-- WAIT!--THIS PAPER!...
SUDDENLY, THE ACE DETECTIVE DIVES AT ATTORNEY JANSEN'S FEET...
I WANT A LOOK AT THE SOLES OF YOUR SHOES, JANSEN -- QUICK!
WHA...?
GREEN PAINT! FROM THE FRESHLY PAINTED TERRACE WALK BEHIND JOEY LONG'S APARTMENT! JANSEN--I ARREST YOU FOR THE MURDER OF CLYDE RANDELL! YOU! WERE MY HOODED ATTACKER!
AFTERWARD, JOHNNY EXPLAINS AT HEAD-- QUARTERS...
YOU SAY JANSEN HAD TO FREE KIRKLAND TO COMPLETE A FRAME AGAINST HIM?
RIGHT! HE HAD ALREADY PLANTED THE TIME BOMB IN RANDELL'S STUDY TO GO OFF AT A CERTAIN HOUR! HE ALSO PLANTED KIRKLAND'S WALLET THERE! THE WHOLE CASE CLEARED UP WHEN I FOUND THIS PAPER IN RANDELL'S STUDY! IT'S A NOTE TO THE D.A. ACCUSING JANSEN OF ROBBING THE FIRM OF KIRKLAND-RANDELL WHILE ACTING AS THEIR ATTORNEY!
THE END


SUPERMAN IS ON TELEVISION!
Yes,
AMERICA'S FAVORITE ADVENTURE CHARACTER COMES RIGHT INTO YOUR HOME IN
THRILLING LIVE ACTION!
WATCH FOR LOCAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF THIS GREAT NEW SHOW FOR ALL THE FAMILY!

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WANT A WASH THAT'S REALLY CLEAN, WHITER AND BRIGHTER THAN NEW?

NEW RAIN-SOFT RINSO GUARANTEES YOU A WASH THAT'S WHITER, BRIGHTER THAN NEW!
MOM SAYS MY DRESSES ARE BRIGHTER NOW THAN WHEN THEY CAME FROM THE STORE!
TRY RINSO— PROVE IT TO YOURSELF!

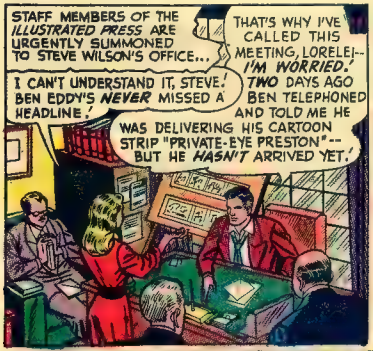
COMPARE!

Simply wash a dress (or any other article) with Rinso. Then compare it with a brand new one, just as it comes from the store. You'll see for yourself—Rain-Soft Rinso actually washes whiter, brighter than new. Get Rinso today!

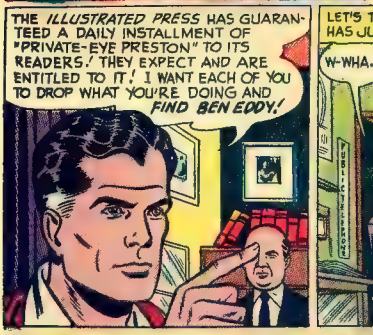
GUARANTEE: New Rain-Soft Rinso is guaranteed by Lever Brothers Company to get your clothes WHITER, BRIGHTER than new or your money will be cheerfully refunded.

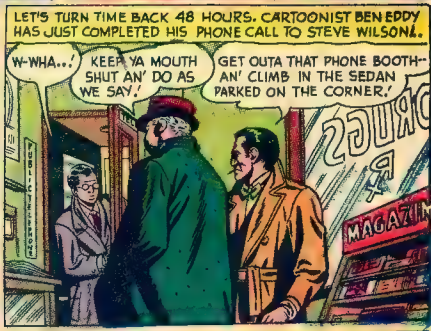
ONLY RINSO CONTAINS SOLIUM . . . PUTS SUNSHINE IN YOUR WASH!

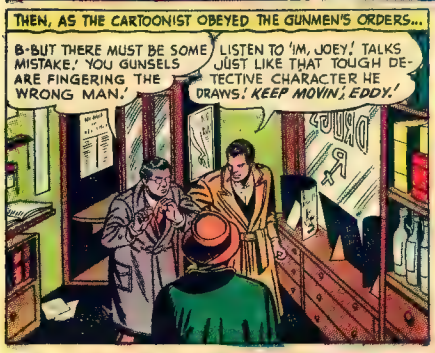
RAT-TAT-TAT-
YOUR NUMBER'S UP, THIS TIME, WILSON--HA-HA!
BANG!
BIG TOWN
NEWSMAN STEVE WILSON SEEKS OUT THE STRANGEST STORY OF HIS CAREER AS HE BATTLES CRIMINAL CHARACTERS FROM A WORLD OF COMICS! BUT HOW IS IT POSSIBLE TO FORESEE THE ACTIONS OF SHADOWY FIGURES SPRINGING FORTH FROM AN ARTIST'S MIND? THIS IS THE PROBLEM STEVE MUST SOLVE IF HE HOPES TO BRING AN END TO --
"THE CARTOON CRIMES!"


STAFF MEMBERS OF THE *ILLUSTRATED PRESS* ARE URGENTLY SUMMONED TO STEVE WILSON'S OFFICE...
THAT'S WHY I'VE CALLED THIS MEETING, LORELEI--
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT, STEVE.' BEN EDDY'S *NEVER* MISSED A HEADLINE.'
I'M WORRIED.' TWO DAYS AGO BEN TELEPHONED AND TOLD ME HE WAS DELIVERING HIS CARTOON STRIP "PRIVATE-EYE PRESTON"-- BUT HE *HASN'T* ARRIVED YET.'

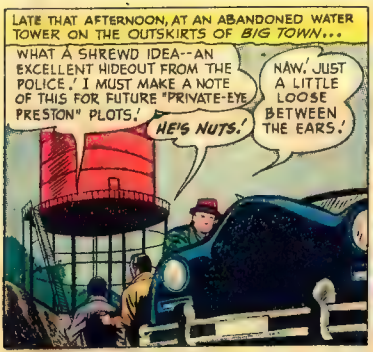
THE AMAZING AUTHENTICITY OF BEN'S DETECTIVE STRIP HAS CAPTURED THE IMAGINATION OF *BIG TOWN!* EVEN OUR POLICE OFFICIALS HAVE PRAISED THE REMARKABLE REALISM AND SKILLFUL PLOTTING OF HIS STORIES.'

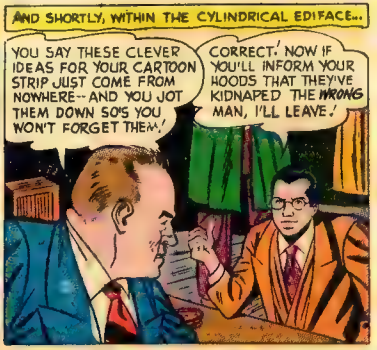

THE *ILLUSTRATED PRESS* HAS GUARANTEED A DAILY INSTALLMENT OF "PRIVATE-EYE PRESTON" TO ITS READERS.' THEY EXPECT AND ARE ENTITLED TO IT.' I WANT EACH OF YOU TO DROP WHAT YOU'RE DOING AND *FIND BEN EDDY.'*


LET'S TURN TIME BACK 48 HOURS. CARTOONIST BEN EDDY HAS JUST COMPLETED HIS PHONE CALL TO STEVE WILSON.
W-WHA..!
KEEP YA MOUTH SHUT AN' DO AS WE SAY.'
GET OUTA THAT PHONE BOOTH-- AN' CLIMB IN THE SEDAN PARKED ON THE CORNER.'

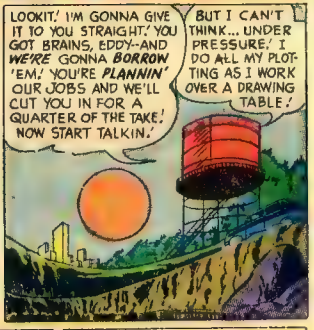

THEN, AS THE CARTOONIST OBEYED THE GUNMEN'S ORDERS...
B-BUT THERE MUST BE SOME MISTAKE.' YOU GUNSELS ARE FINGERING THE WRONG MAN.'
LISTEN TO 'IM, JOEY.' TALKS JUST LIKE THAT TOUGH DETECTIVE CHARACTER HE DRAWS.' *KEEP MOVIN', EDDY.'*

AT 11:35 A.M. BEN EDDY WAS TAKEN TO A PARKED SEDAN AT THE CORNER OF WILKS AND EVERS STREETS...
B-BUT WHAT DO YOU WANT OF ME?
YOU'LL FIND OUT!

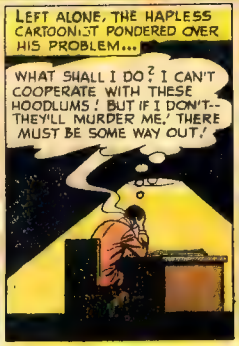

LATE THAT AFTERNOON, AT AN ABANDONED WATER TOWER ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF BIG TOWN...
WHAT A SHREWD IDEA--AN EXCELLENT HIDEOUT FROM THE POLICE. I MUST MAKE A NOTE OF THIS FOR FUTURE "PRIVATE-EYE PRESTON" PLOTS.
HE'S NUTS.
NAW. JUST A LITTLE LOOSE BETWEEN THE EARS.

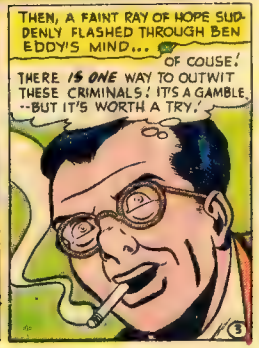

AND SHORTLY, WITHIN THE CYLINDRICAL EDIFACE...
YOU SAY THESE CLEVER IDEAS FOR YOUR CARTOON STRIP JUST COME FROM NOWHERE--AND YOU JOT THEM DOWN SO'S YOU WON'T FORGET THEM.
CORRECT. NOW IF YOU'LL INFORM YOUR HOODS THAT THEY'VE KIDNAPED THE WRONG MAN, I'LL LEAVE.

BUT YOU'RE THE RIGHT MAN, EDDY. YOU SEE, THE BOYS FIGURED YOU WERE WASTING YOUR TALENT. WHY, A GUY WHO CAN LAY OUT JOBS THE WAY YOU DO IN THAT CARTOON STRIP SHOULD BE MAKIN' BIG DOUGH.
ARE YOU SUGGESTING... NONSENSE! I COULD NEVER LEND MY TALENT TO CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES.
RIDICULOUS.


LOOKIT. I'M GONNA GIVE IT TO YOU STRAIGHT. YOU GOT BRAINS, EDDY--AND WE'RE GONNA BORROW 'EM. YOU'RE PLANNIN' OUR JOBS AND WE'LL CUT YOU IN FOR A QUARTER OF THE TAKE. NOW START TALKIN.
BUT I CAN'T THINK... UNDER PRESSURE. I DO ALL MY PLOTTING AS I WORK OVER A DRAWING TABLE.

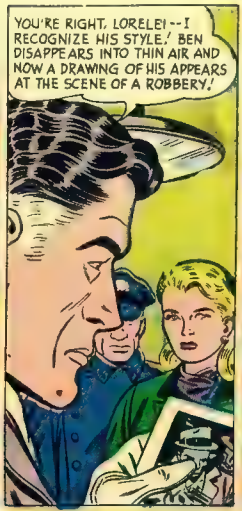
OKAY. SCOUT UP SOME PAPER AND PENCILS, JOEY. WE'LL LEAVE THIS MASTERMIND ALONE FOR AWHILE--AND HE'D BETTER PRODUCE.
SURE THING, BIG FRANK.

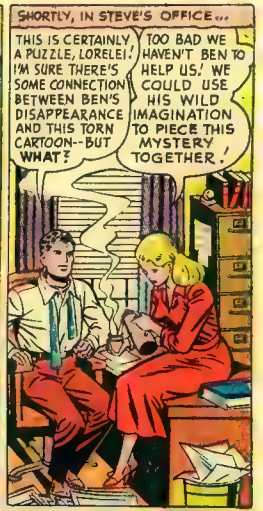

LEFT ALONE, THE HAPLESS CARTOONIST PONDERED OVER HIS PROBLEM...
WHAT SHALL I DO? I CAN'T COOPERATE WITH THESE HOODLUMS! BUT IF I DON'T--THEY'LL MURDER ME. THERE MUST BE SOME WAY OUT.


THEN, A FAINT RAY OF HOPE SUDDENLY FLASHED THROUGH BEN EDDY'S MIND...
OF COUSE!
THERE IS ONE WAY TO OUTWIT THESE CRIMINALS! IT'S A GAMBLE --BUT IT'S WORTH A TRY.
3

THE FOLLOWING EVENING, AS NEWSMAN STEVE WILSON AND HIS PRETTY ASSISTANT, LORELEI, SEARCH BIG TOWN FOR THE MISSING CARTOONIST...
STEVE... LISTEN! IT'S A POLICE CALL--PERHAPS THERE'S NEWS OF BEN!
PATROL CARS 3-4-7-9, ALARM AT BRENT AVENUE POST OFFICE! PROCEED THERE IMMEDIATELY!
NO SUCH LUCK, LORELEI! BUT IT SOUNDS LIKE A STORY--WE'D BETTER CHECK!
SHORTLY, AS THE PAIR SPEEDS TOWARD THE AREA...
LOOK, STEVE, THE POLICE ARE CHASING THAT CAR TURNING OFF BRENT AVENUE
SCREEEEEEEE!
ARRRRR
BUT SUDDENLY, AS STEVE AND LORELEI CROSS THE INTERSECTION IN PURSUIT OF THE GANGSTER VEHICLE...
STEVE! WHAT'S WRONG!
SOMETHING OILY ON THE STREET... WE'RE IN A SKID!
PRESS
SCREEEE
SPLAAAAASH
HA-HA-HA-HA-HA!
THEN, AFTER THE PRESS CAR SKIDS TO AN ABRUPT HALT...
THEY'RE CLEVER OPERATORS, LORELEI! THAT GADGET IN BACK OF THEIR CAR SPRAYED THE ENTIRE STREET WITH OIL! THEY CERTAINLY ANTICIPATED A CHASE!
OIL? HMM... THAT SOUNDS FAMILIAR...
LATER, AT THE BRENT AVENUE POST OFFICE...
THEY GOT IN THROUGH THAT VENTILATOR WHICH LEADS UP TO THE ROOF! GOT AWAY WITH OVER $100,000 IN GOVERNMENT BONDS!
THAT OIL GADGET THEY USED IN THEIR ESCAPE--AND NOW THIS METHOD OF ENTERING HERE--THEY BOTH STRIKE A FAMILIAR CHORD...

INSPECTOR CALLAHAN,' WE FOUND THIS HOOKED ONTO THE VENTILATING MESHING ON THE ROOF.' IT'S A DRAWING OF SOME SORT...
IT LOOKS LIKE BEN'S WORK.' BUT WHAT WOULD IT BE DOING UP THERE?


YOU'RE RIGHT, LORELEI--I RECOGNIZE HIS STYLE.' BEN DISAPPEARS INTO THIN AIR AND NOW A DRAWING OF HIS APPEARS AT THE SCENE OF A ROBBERY.'

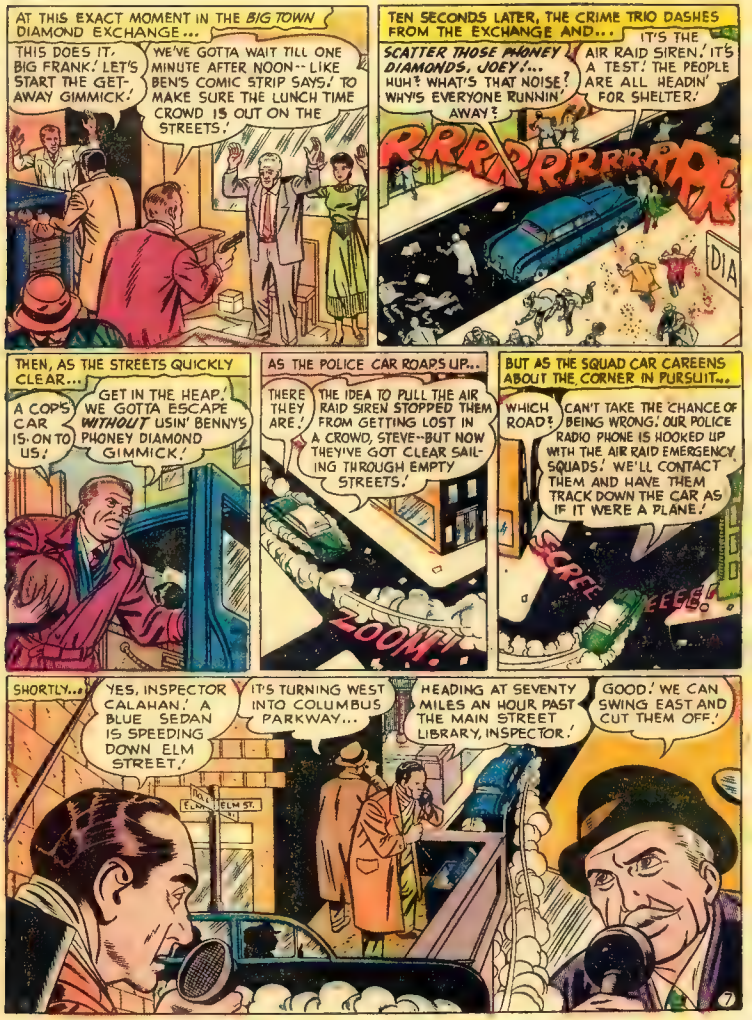

SHORTLY, IN STEVE'S OFFICE...
THIS IS CERTAINLY A PUZZLE, LORELEI! I'M SURE THERE'S SOME CONNECTION BETWEEN BEN'S DISAPPEARANCE AND THIS TORN CARTOON--BUT WHAT?
TOO BAD WE HAVEN'T BEN TO HELP US.' WE COULD USE HIS WILD IMAGINATION TO PIECE THIS MYSTERY TOGETHER.'

YOU'VE HIT IT,' OF COURSE... BEN'S *WILD IMAGINATION.*' HURRY DOWN TO THE FILE ROOM--BRING ME EVERY REJECTED CARTOON PAGE OF BEN'S.'
RIGHT, STEVE.'

MEANWHILE, AT BIG FRANK'S HIDE-OUT NORTH OF *BIG TOWN*...
HA, HA.' IT WAS A CINCH.' WE JUST DID EVERY-THING EDDY DREW UP IN HIS CARTOONS.'
THIS GUY'S A GENIUS.' I WOULDN'T TRADE HIM FOR A MILLION.' BE-CAUSE HE'S GONNA MAKE US MORE.' SAY...LET'S LEAVE HIM ALONE! HE'S GOTTA GET ANOTHER JOB OUT FOR US BY TOMORROW.'

AFTER THE HOODLUMS LEAVE...
I CAN'T GO ON DRAWING UP THESE CRIMES FOR THEM.' I'LL TRY *ONE* MORE! IF STEVE DOESN'T CATCH ON TO THIS ONE, THEN I'LL...I'LL HAVE TO LET THEM KILL ME.'

HOURS LATER, WHEN BIG FRANK AND HIS BOYS RETURN TO THEIR PRISONER...
HE'S FINISHED, BOYS--AND TAKE A LOOK AT IT. THIS HOLDUP'S FULL OF GIMMICKS.
IT'S THE BIGGEST JOB OF ALL! A HEIST ON THE DIAMOND EXCHANGE.
BUT HE'S GOT US PITCHIN' ICE ALL OVER THE STREET. HE'S CRAZY.
DIAMON
DIAMC
YOU NITWIT! THOSE STONES ARE PHONIES--WE TOSS 'EM IN THE STREETS DURING THE NOON RUSH HOUR AND THE CROWD BLOCKS THE COPS OFF FROM TAILING US WHILE WE GET AWAY WITH A FORTUNE. NEAT, HUH?
TERRIFIC! EDDY IS A WIZARD!
THIS JOB'S A NATURAL... WE'LL PULL IT OFF TOMORROW AND BLOW TOWN! BEFORE THE COPS KNOW WHAT HAPPENED, WE'LL BE OUTA THE COUNTRY.
HA, HA! THIS IS GONNA BE LIKE TAKING CANDY FROM A BABY.
THROUGHOUT THAT EVENING AND FOLLOWING MORNING, STEVE WILSON WADES THROUGH A MASS OF CARTOON STRIPS AS HE PLAYS A LONE HUNCH. FINALLY...
THIS IS IT, LORELEI--A ROUGH ON A STORY IDEA BEN SUBMITTED! GREAT THUNDER! IF ONLY I'M ON THE RIGHT TRACK! GET INSPECTOR CALLAHAN ON THE PHONE!
YES, STEVE!
SECONDS LATER...
THAT'S RIGHT, INSPECTOR CALLAHAN! AND IF I'M CORRECT THE BIG TOWN DIAMOND EXCHANGE IS BEING ROBBED AT THIS MINUTE! I SUGGEST WE PLAY ALONG WITH BEN'S PLAN AND CALL THE CITY DEFENSE BUREAU AT ONCE!
SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE ONTO SOMETHING, STEVE! I'LL MAKE THE CALL AND PICK YOU UP ON THE WAY DOWNTOWN!


AT THIS EXACT MOMENT IN THE BIG TOWN DIAMOND EXCHANGE...
THIS DOES IT, BIG FRANK! LET'S START THE GET-AWAY GIMMICK!
WE'VE GOTTA WAIT TILL ONE MINUTE AFTER NOON -- LIKE BEN'S COMIC STRIP SAYS, TO MAKE SURE THE LUNCH TIME CROWD IS OUT ON THE STREETS!
TEN SECONDS LATER, THE CRIME TRIO DASHES FROM THE EXCHANGE AND...
SCATTER THOSE PHONEY DIAMONDS, JOEY!...
HUH? WHAT'S THAT NOISE? WHY'S EVERYONE RUNNIN' AWAY?
IT'S THE AIR RAID SIREN! IT'S A TEST! THE PEOPLE ARE ALL HEADIN' FOR SHELTER!
RRRRRRRRRRRR
DIA
THEN, AS THE STREETS QUICKLY CLEAR...
A COP'S CAR IS ON TO US!
GET IN THE HEAP! WE GOTTA ESCAPE WITHOUT USIN' BENNY'S PHONEY DIAMOND GIMMICK!
AS THE POLICE CAR ROARS UP...
THERE THEY ARE!
THE IDEA TO PULL THE AIR RAID SIREN STOPPED THEM FROM GETTING LOST IN A CROWD, STEVE--BUT NOW THEY'VE GOT CLEAR SAILING THROUGH EMPTY STREETS!
ZOOM!
BUT AS THE SQUAD CAR CAREENS ABOUT THE CORNER IN PURSUIT...
WHICH ROAD?
CAN'T TAKE THE CHANCE OF BEING WRONG! OUR POLICE RADIO PHONE IS HOOKED UP WITH THE AIR RAID EMERGENCY SQUADS! WE'LL CONTACT THEM AND HAVE THEM TRACK DOWN THE CAR AS IF IT WERE A PLANE!
SCREE EEEEE
SHORTLY...
YES, INSPECTOR CALAHAN! A BLUE SEDAN IS SPEEDING DOWN ELM STREET!
IT'S TURNING WEST INTO COLUMBUS PARKWAY...
HEADING AT SEVENTY MILES AN HOUR PAST THE MAIN STREET LIBRARY, INSPECTOR!
GOOD! WE CAN SWING EAST AND CUT THEM OFF!
ELM ST.
7

ONE MINUTE LATER, THE POLICE CAR ROARS INTO MAIN STREET AND...
RIDE 'EM OFF THE ROAD!
RIGHT, INSPECTOR!
SCREEEEE
THEN...
I'LL TACKLE THE BIG FELLOW, INSPECTOR!
TAIL
STEVE PLUMMETS THROUGH THE AIR...
AND...
CRASH
WE GOT THE OTHERS, STEVE!
I'M JUST NAILING THE KINGPIN!
CRUSH
AFTERWARDS...
HI, STEVE! AM I GLAD YOU CAUGHT ON THAT I WAS RE DRAWING MY REJECTED COMIC STRIPS FOR THOSE HOODS!
YES, STEVE! HOW DID YOU KNOW ABOUT THE CRIME AT THE DIAMOND EXCHANGE AND THOSE FAKE DIAMONDS THEY TRIED TO USE TO CONFUSE PURSUIT?
I'LL SHOW YOU EVERYTHING AT THE OFFICE, INSPECTOR!
AND LATER, AT THE ILLUSTRATED PRESS BUILDING...
YOU MEAN BEN HAD ALREADY DRAWN THOSE CRIMES UP IN ROUGH, BUT YOU HAD REJECTED THEM FOR PUBLICATION?
THAT'S RIGHT! AFTER REALIZING THE FIRST THEFT WAS A DUPLICATE OF ONE OF HIS REJECTIONS, I CHECKED THE NEXT REJECTION HE HAD--THE ONE REVEALING THE DIAMOND THEFT! HE TOLD THE CROOKS EVERYTHING EXCEPT HOW HIS HERO DETECTIVE SPOILED THE SCHEME BY HAVING THE AIR RAID SIREN SOUNDED!
THE END

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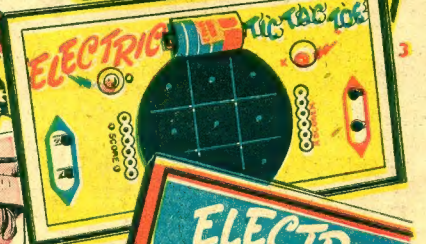

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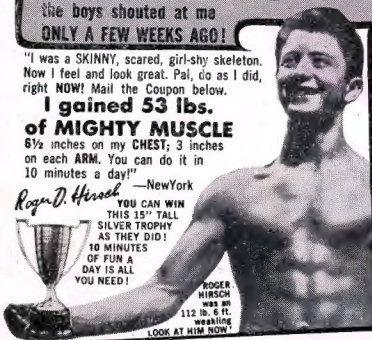

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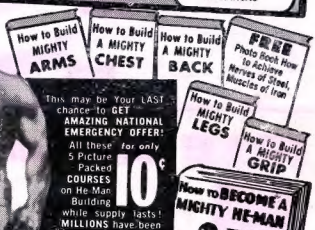
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